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4-H

Extension Service • U.S. Department of Agriculture • PA-1148

...Extension's investment in the future

4-H is the youth education program of the Cooperative Extension Service, which is conducted jointly by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the state land-grant universities, and county governments.

The Extension Service was established to educate—to interpret and encourage the practical use of the knowledge that comes out of scientific research. Its name came from its mission to "extend" this knowledge to the public.

Today it is still an agency for change, stressing education for action through organization and leadership by local citizens.

When it was set up in 1914, Extension served mostly farm families in rural America. But its assignment then, as now, was to disseminate useful information "to all the people." Today, Extension and its 4-H programs serve America in towns, cities, and rural areas, with information on agriculture, home economics, community development, and related subjects.

Extension 4-H work is conducted locally by "county agents," "home economists," and "4-H youth agents." They plan youth programs with advisory committees of local community leaders, in line with local needs. Since needs vary, programs may differ across the Nation. In many places, paraprofessionals help agents with volunteers and 4-H groups.

4-H welcomes everyone to participate, regardless of race, creed, color, sex, or national origin.

What is 4-H?

Today's 4-H program is for all youth—rural and urban—from all racial, cultural, economic, and social backgrounds. It reaches girls and boys in a variety of ways: as members of organized 4-H clubs, as participants in special interest groups, as enrollees in short-term projects. It reaches them through television, camping and other educational methods; and in programs planned to meet specific needs of youth and the communities where they live. Girls and boys "learn by doing" in 4-H.



Youth learn about bicycle care, repair, and safety.

*Learning to work
together at a nutrition
day camp.*

Where is 4-H?

4-H involves young people everywhere—in big cities and little towns, in the country and in the suburbs, on Indian reservations, and in the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, and Guam. Activities are typically conducted in the homes of members or their leaders, in schools, or in other community buildings.

Youth organizations in more than 80 countries around the world have adapted the 4-H idea. Opportunities for individual, club, community, state, national, and international projects and activities are available through 4-H.

A farm-city exchange is a good way to explore and make new friends.



Guatemalan youth salute the "4-S" flag which stands for "health," "to know," "feeling," and "to serve," in Spanish.

4-H projects— many and varied

Today's 4-H gives young people an opportunity to take an active part in learning about and solving problems that face them and their communities. These include problems of environment, health, and the use of drugs. Members participate in projects that give them knowledge of science, agriculture, home economics, personal development, community service, leadership, and citizenship. Often this knowledge helps open the door to a future career. But the main purpose of 4-H is to help youth become effective citizens.



Teenage 4-H'ers enjoy learning from and helping senior citizens.

4-H'ers initiate health care programs, including eye testing.



Young people can study aerospace through 4-H.

Some of the 4-H projects most popular with youth are: food-nutrition, clothing, home improvement, home grounds beautification, health, safety, and leadership. New projects range from aerospace to theatics and karate.

In rural areas, many 4-H members work with livestock, crops, poultry, forestry, marketing, and farm machinery. Both girls and boys learn new farming methods, do experimental research, and have fun in the process.

Popular with city, suburban, and rural young people alike are projects in community development, electricity, environmental protection and conservation, home gardening, photography, public speaking, woodworking, entomology, small engines, grooming, and personal development. Older girls and boys find satisfaction and challenge in projects in automotive care and safety, career studies, money management, consumer education, and leadership.

Flexibility is the key to today's 4-H projects—flexibility in the kinds of learning offered, and in the variety and size of projects. For instance, one of the fastest growing is a horse project for youth who don't own horses!



Through 4-H, young women and men get practical experience in automotive upkeep and safety.

The care and feeding of a living thing instills responsibility and pride in young people.

*Early 4-H Extension
youth work consisted
primarily of corn clubs
for boys...*



*...and canning
clubs for girls.*



How 4-H reaches youth

4-H is organized in different ways, for different needs, in different places. Organization may take the form of:

- Community or Neighborhood 4-H clubs
- Project Clubs
- Special Interest Groups
- Television Teaching
- 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)
- Special Activities.

Young people may take part through any or all of these.

Community or neighborhood clubs

The community or neighborhood 4-H club is associated with an area known to local people, such as a crossroads, a small village, a township, a section of a suburban community, a city block or blocks, or a housing complex. The number of 4-H members in a club may range from 5 or 6 to more than 100. This type of 4-H club continues from year to year. Usually both girls and boys belong to the club, enrolling in projects according to their interests.

Project clubs

In many states, 4-H is organized on a "project club" basis. Young people are encouraged to form these clubs for a year or less. Examples include project clubs for garden, clothing, dairy, automotive, horse, tractor, small engine, etc. These 4-H clubs vary in number of members from 5 or 6 to 50 or more. The 4-H project club territory may range from a neighborhood cluster of a few families, or a city block, to two or three towns, or an entire county. In many counties, members of community or neighborhood 4-H clubs may belong to a larger area 4-H project club. Teenagers especially like this system.



Study of their home community helps 4-H'ers plan to make it a better place to live.

Youth in community clubs learn basic skills.





*Getting to know
yourself and others in a
group.*

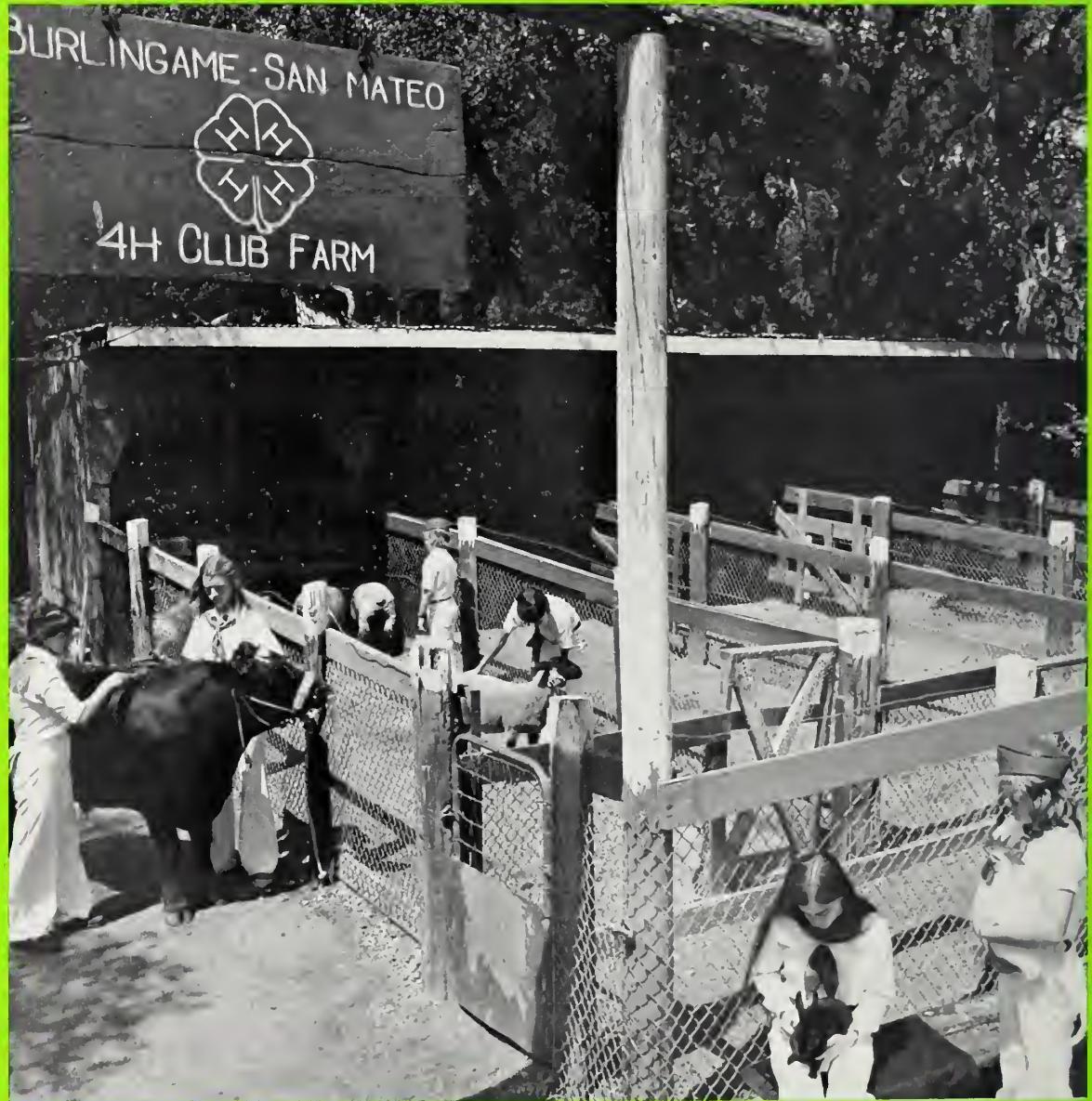


*Projects may fit a large
farm or a small
apartment equally well.*



Members learn to help and depend on others in specialized project groups.

Youth with common interests band together to share equipment and ideas.



Special interest groups

Here the subjects taught depend on the special interests and ages of girls and boys, related to the needs of their community. Young people may take part in this kind of intensive short-term group if they do not wish to be members of a 4-H club. They may get training in bicycle safety, health, first aid, firefighting, or for jobs in local businesses.



A common interest gathers a group.

Television teaching

In the late 1950's a State Cooperative Extension Service produced the first 4-H TV series. That series of 13 half-hour programs about electricity was designed for 9- to 11-year-olds. Since then, several states have developed and shared 4-H TV. Television films or video tapes and educational materials for members and leaders are used in groups or individually. Many have been programmed through school systems. More than 6 million youth enrolled in "Mulligan Stew," the 4-H nutrition television programs developed by Extension Service-USDA in the early 70's.



Television brings a 4-H experience to school.

*Nutrition education
brings out creativity as
4-H EFNEP participants
teach each other
through skits, art, and
games.*



4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)

Extension strongly emphasizes working with youth through 4-H EFNEP programs, primarily in the disadvantaged areas of our Nation's cities. Extension staff work through volunteer local leaders, reaching about 800,000 youth per year. The EFNEP program centers on the principles of nutrition, diets, use of foods, and personal development. 4-H EFNEP teaching is usually done in informal groups, using methods such as educational games, camps, tours, films, and television.

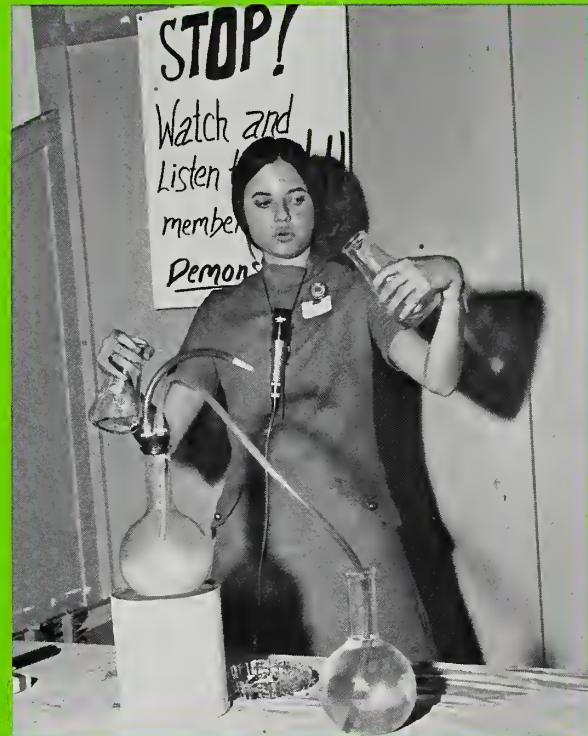
Special activities

Special educational activities often supplement 4-H programs. These include tours; 4-H junior and teen leader training workshops; achievement programs; camps; state conferences; seminars; recreational leadership training; share-the-fun festivals; exhibitions, fairs, and shows; project training meetings; and career exploration.

Two national events are held for 4-H members each year. The largest is the National 4-H Congress, held in the late fall in Chicago, to recognize about 2,000 state, sectional, and national winners. The National 4-H Conference, held each spring at the National 4-H Center in Washington, D.C., involves 250 4-H'ers in developing national 4-H programs.

Groups and individual 4-H'ers take part in special activities as they gain experience and can benefit from them.

Sports events can be a 4-H special activity.



4-H'ers both teach and learn through member demonstrations.



Volunteer leaders

Volunteer leaders are vital to Extension programs. Extension agents and 4-H leaders target the problems they want to work on. The agents, and sometimes paraprofessionals, train the leaders. Leaders in turn teach youth groups. This way, volunteer leaders extend and multiply the teaching skill and knowledge of the limited number of professional Extension workers.



A volunteer leader may head a project group, such as this one for study of marine science, on a year-round basis or for a few days.



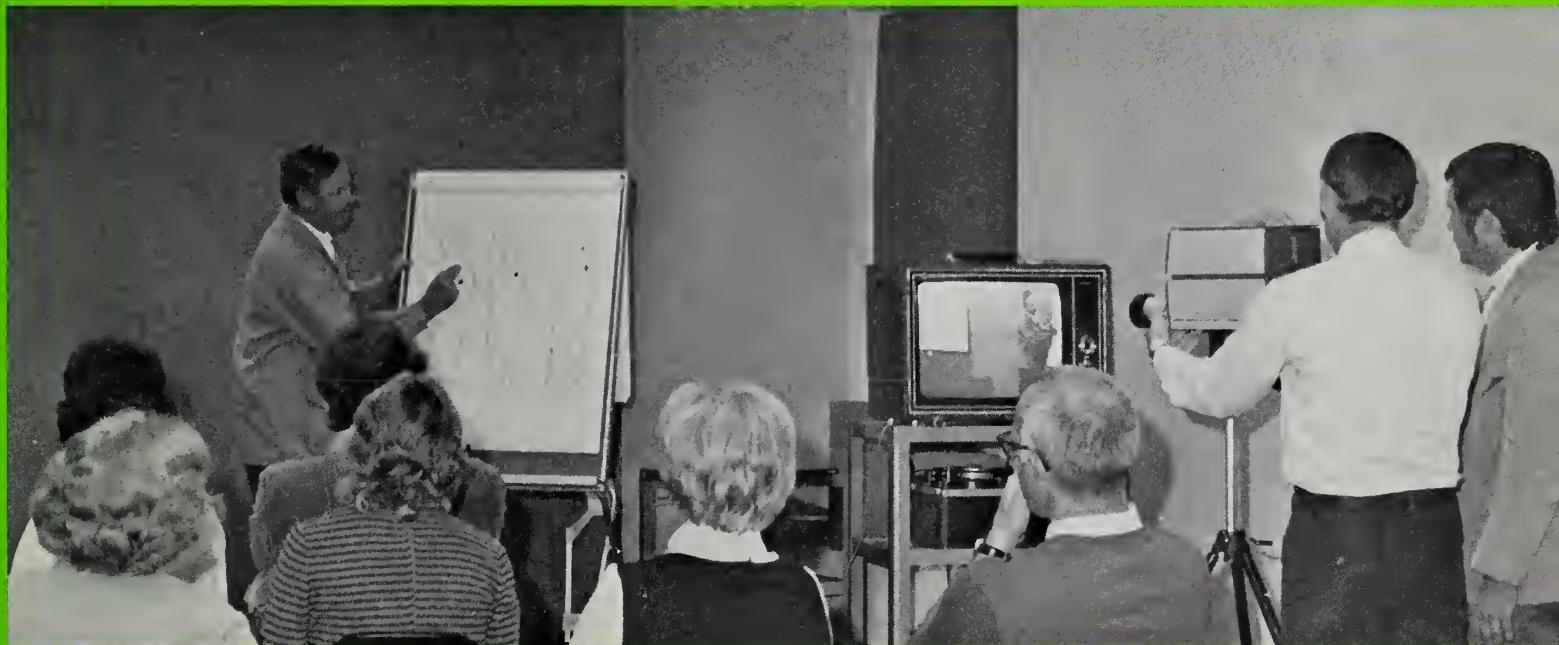
Agents extend their knowledge through training adult and teen volunteers.

Public and private support

Teenage 4-H'ers exchange ideas with corporate executives during the annual National 4-H Congress.

4-H is financed by approximately \$115,000,000 annually from federal, state, and local governments, and by an estimated additional \$25,000,000 from county and state private sources. Private support for 4-H at the national level is \$7,000,000. Thirty-eight states now have 4-H foundations or development funds, some of which have fund-raising goals in excess of \$1,000,000. More than 200 of the Nation's top corporations contribute to 4-H annually.

The National 4-H Foundation and the National 4-H Service Committee—the two national organizations which have provided channels for private support to the 4-H program—have been unified as the National 4-H Council. The Council is teamed with Extension to advance 4-H work.



4-H state and county staff attend workshops at the National 4-H Center.

For more about 4-H

Your county Extension agent can give you information about the 4-H program in your community. Or you may write to the Cooperative Extension Service of your state land-grant university listed below, or to the Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Alabama—Auburn University, Auburn 36830	Maryland—University of Maryland, College Park 20742	Oregon—Oregon State University, Corvallis 97331
Alaska—University of Alaska, Fairbanks 99701	Massachusetts—University of Massachusetts, Amherst 01002	Pennsylvania—The Pennsylvania State University, University Park 16802
Arizona—University of Arizona, Tucson 85721	Michigan—Michigan State University, East Lansing 48823	Puerto Rico—University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras 00928
Arkansas—P.O. Box 391, Little Rock 72203	Minnesota—University of Minnesota, St. Paul 55101	Rhode Island—University of Rhode Island, Kingston 02881
California—University of California, 2200 University Ave., Berkeley 94720	Mississippi—Mississippi State University, Mississippi State 39762	South Carolina—Clemson University, Clemson 29631
Colorado—Colorado State University, Fort Collins 80521	Missouri—University of Missouri, 309 University Hall, Columbia 65201	South Dakota—South Dakota State University, Brookings 57006
Connecticut—University of Connecticut, Storrs 06268	Montana—Montana State University, Bozeman 59715	Tennessee—University of Tennessee, Knoxville 37901
Delaware—University of Delaware, Newark 19711	Nebraska—University of Nebraska, Lincoln 68503	Texas—Texas A&M University, College Station 77843
District of Columbia—Federal City College and Washington Technical Institute, 1331 H St. NW, Washington 20005	Nevada—University of Nevada, Reno 89507	Utah—Utah State University, Logan 84321
Florida—University of Florida, Gainesville 32601	New Hampshire—University of New Hampshire, Taylor Hall, Durham 03824	Vermont—University of Vermont, Burlington 05401
Georgia—University of Georgia, Athens 30601	New Jersey—Rutgers—The State University, P.O. Box 231, New Brunswick 08903	Virginia—Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg 24061
Guam—University of Guam, P.O. Box EK, Agana 96910	New Mexico—New Mexico State University, Las Cruces 88001	Virgin Islands—P.O. Box L, Kingshill, St. Croix 00850
Hawaii—University of Hawaii, Honolulu 96822	New York—N.Y. State College of Agriculture, Ithaca 14853	Washington—Washington State University, Pullman 99163
Idaho—University of Idaho, Morrill Hall, Moscow 83843	North Carolina—North Carolina State University, Raleigh 27607	West Virginia—West Virginia University, 294 Coliseum, Morgantown 26506
Illinois—University of Illinois, Urbana 61801	North Dakota—North Dakota State University, Fargo 58102	Wisconsin—University of Wisconsin, 432 North Lake St., Madison 53706
Indiana—Purdue University, Lafayette 47907	Ohio—Ohio State University, 2120 Fyffe Rd., Columbus 43210	Wyoming—University of Wyoming, Box 3354 Univ. Station, Laramie 82070
Iowa—Iowa State University, Ames 50010	Oklahoma—Oklahoma State University, Stillwater 74074	



Creative leisure.



Training for a career.

**In 4-H...
it's kids
that count!**



Safety can be fun.



4-H Pledge: I Pledge:
My HEAD to clearer thinking,
My HEART to greater loyalty,
My HANDS to larger service, and
My HEALTH to better living,
for my club, my community, my country, and my world.

4-H Colors: Green and White.

4-H Motto: To make the best better.

4-H Emblem: Green four-leaf clover with a white "H" on each leaf.
The four H's stand for Head, Heart, Hands, and Health.

The Extension Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture offers its
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